

C 96-59

Faculty of Music

University of Toronto

Thursday Noon Series

Walter Hall

October 17, 1996

12:10pm

MUSIC AND POETRY



Schoenberg, Shostakovich and Stravinsky
with

Vilma Indra Vitols, mezzo soprano;

John Hawkins, piano;

Professor Sterling Beckwith, commentator

Programme

Zwei Lieder, op.14(1907-08)

Arnold Schoenberg
(1874-1951)

1. Ich darf nicht dankend...
2. In diesen Wintertagen



Professor Sterling Beckwith, York University, will introduce the Shostakovich work.

Six Poems of Marina Tsvetaeva Suite for Contralto and Piano, op.143(1974)

Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906-1975)

1. To my verses
2. Why such tenderness?
3. Hamlet argues with his conscience
4. Poet and Tsar
5. A hero's burial
6. To Anna Akhmatova



SIDE II

The Owl and the Pussy-cat (1966)

Igor Stravinsky
(1882-1971)

The next Music & Poetry Lecture/Concert will be held November 21, 1996 as a part of the Thursday Noon Series in Walter Hall. This event will feature works by Benjamin Britten and Elliott Carter with Professor Eric Domville, commentator; Liesel Fedkenheuer, mezzo-soprano; Michael Colvin, tenor; and John Hawkins, piano.

Zwei Leider, op.14

Arnold Schoenberg

ICH DARF NICHT DANKEND
(aus: "Waller im Schnee")

Ich darf nicht dankend an dir
niedersinken.
Du bist vom Geist der Flur, aus der wir
stiegen:
Will sich mein Trost an deine Wehmut
schmiegen,
So wird sie zucken, um ihm abzuwinken.

Verharrst du bei dem quälenden
Beschlusse,
Nie deines Leides Nähe zugestehen,
Und nur mit ihm und mir zu ergehen
Am eisigkalten tiefentschlafnen Flusse?
-Stefan George (1868-1933)

2. IN DIESEN WINTERTAGEN

In diesen Wintertagen,
nun sich das Licht verhüllt,
lass uns im Herzen tragen,
einander traulich sagen,
was uns mit innerm Licht erfüllt.

Was wilde Glut entzündet,
soll brennen fort und fort.
Was Seelen zart verbindet
und Geisterbrücken gründet,
sei unser Losungswort.

Das Rad der Zeit mag rollen,
wir greifen kaum hinein.
Dem Schein der Welt verschollen,
auf unserm Eiland wollen
wir Tag und Nacht der seligen Liebe
weih'n.
-Georg Henckel

1. I MUST NOT IN THANKS KNEEL
DOWN (from: "Pilgrimage through
snow")

I must not in thanks kneel down before
you.
You are the spiritual plain from which we
rose:
If my consolation clings to your grief,

So will your grief palpitate in beckoning
it.

Will you persist in the agonizing determi-
nation
Never to confess your innermost grief,
And only to walk abroad with it and me
beside the icy-cold deeply-sleeping river?

2. IN THESE WINTER DAYS

In these winter days
now that the light is veiled,
let us carry in our hearts,
intimately tell each other
what fills us with inner light.

That which kindles intense light
shall burn on and on.
Let that which binds gentle souls together
and builds spiritual bridges
be our watchword.

The wheel of time may roll,
we hardly grasp at it.
Lost to the glare of the world,
on our island, we will
dedicate ourselves day and night to
blessed love.

Six Poems of Marina Tsvetaeva
Dmitri Shostakovich

1. TO MY VERSES

O my verses, written so early
I wasn't yet aware I was a poet,
Verses that flew out like spray from a
fountain,
Like sparks from rockets,

Verses that burst through like little
demons
Into a shrine of incense and dream,
My verses about youth and death
-O my unread verses!-

Scattered about in dusty storerooms
(Whence no one yet has chosen to retrieve
them!),
My verses are like precious wines:
Their time will come.

2. WHY SUCH TENDERNESS?

But why such tenderness?
These aren't the first such curls I've
stroked,
And I've known lips darker than yours.

Stars have risen and grown dim
(But why such tenderness?)
Eyes have risen and grown dim
Before my very eyes.

Nor are these yet the songs
I used to hear in the dark of night
(But why such tenderness?)
On the very bosom of the singer.

But why such tenderness?
And what shall I do with it, mischievous
youth,
Wandering singer,
With eyelashes longer than all?

3. HAMLET ARGUES WITH HIS
CONSCIENCE

She's at the bottom now,
in the muck and the weeds...
She went there to sleep,
But no sleep there either!

Yet I loved her,
As forty thousand brothers
Could not love her!

Hamlet! She's at the bottom now,
In the muck: the muck!
And her last wreath floated up
On the riverside logs...

But I loved her, as much as forty thou-
sand-
Yet still less than a single real lover.
She's at the bottom now, in the muck.
But I did...love her??

4. POET AND TSAR

In the next world's
Hall of the Tsars:
-And who is this unbending
Marble one?

So magnificent
in his gold epaulettes?
-Pitiful policeman
of Pushkin's glory.

The author, he swore at.
The manuscripts, he slashed.
A bestial butcher
In his Polish lands.

Be more vigilant!
Do *not* forget:
That poet-killer
Tsar Nicholas-the first!

5. A HERO'S BURIAL?

Yes, a drumming *was* heard, as soldiers
stood guard
on the day when our leader was buried:
The gums of the Tsar beating o'er our
dead bard
were what drummed out his funeral
honors...

Such an honor, that even closest friends
couldn't find room. At the head, at the
foot,
To the right, the left-standing stiff at
attention-
Row on row of uniformed stomachs and
mugs.

Amazing that even on this quietest of
beds,
he still looks like an unruly kid in
detention!
There's something this looks like,
something else-
Such honor, much honor-yes, too much!

Look here, this country now, despite what
they say,
see how much your monarch takes care of
his poet!
Such honor, such honor, such great
honor... be damned!

Who is this they're burying anyway?
A bunch of thieves laying out some shot-
up crony?
A traitor? No. Out the rear gate goes...
The wisest man in all Russia.

6. TO ANNA AKHMATOVA

O Muse of Weeping, lovelier than all the
muses!
You untamed offspring of the white
nights!
You cast a black blizzard down upon Old
Rus,
and your howls transfix us like arrows.

And we shy away, and only a muffled
akh!
(the millionth) swears allegiance to your
name,
Anna Akhmatova! That name itself
is one enormous sigh,
falling into a chasm that is nameless.

We shall receive our heavenly crown
from
walking the same earth with you,
knowing that the sky above us is the same
sky.
And whosoever has been wounded
by your mortal fate shall sink, already
immortal,
to their final bed.

In my city of song, the cupolas are
blazing:
A blind beggar glorifies the radiant
Saviour...
My gift to you is all my ringing city,
Akhmatova! And my own heart as well.
-Marina Tsvetaeva(1892-1941)
Translations © 1994, 1996
by R.S. Beckwith

1. МОИМ СТИХАМ

Моим стихам, написанным так рано,
Что и не знала я, что я — поэт,
Сорвавшимся, как брызги из фонтана,
Как искры из ракет.

Ворвавшимся, как маленькие черти,
В святителище, где сон и фимиам.
Моим стихам о юности и смерти,
— Нечитанным стихам! —

Разбросанным в пыли по магазинам
(Где их никто не брал и не берет!)
Моим стихам, как драгоценным винам,
Настанет свой черед.

2. ОТКУДА ТАКАЯ НЕЖНОСТЬ?

Откуда такая нежность?
Не первые эти кудри разглаживаю,
И губы знавала темней твоих.

Всходили и гасли звезды
(Откуда такая нежность?)
Всходили и гасли очи
У самых моих очей.

Еще не такие песни
Я слушала ночью темной
(Откуда такая нежность?)
На самой груди певца.

Откуда такая нежность?
И что с нею делать, отрок
Лукавый, певец захожий,
С ресницами нет длинней?

3. ДИАЛОГ ГАМЛЕТА С СОВЕСТЬЮ

На дне она, где ил и водоросли...
Спать в них ушла,
Но сна и там нет!

Но я ее любил,
Как сорок тысяч братьев
Любить не могут!

Гамлет! На дне она,
где ил: ил!
И последний венчик всплыв
На приченных бревнах...

Но я ее любил, как сорок тысяч —
Меньше, все ж, чем один любовник.
На дне она, где ил.
— Но я ее —

любил??...

4. ПОЭТ И ЦАРЬ

Потусторонним
Залом царей.
— А непреклонный
Мраморный сей?

Столь величавый
В золоте барм.
— Пушкинской славы
Жалкий жандарм.

Автора — хаял,
Рукопись — стриг.
Польского края
Зверский мясник.

Зорче взгляды!
Не забывай:
Певцоубийца
Царь Николай
Первый.

5. НЕТ, БИЛ БАРАБАН

Нет, бил барабан перед смутным полком,
Когда мы вождя хоронили:
То зубы царицы над мертвым певцом
Почетную дробь выводили.

Такой уж почет, что ближайшим друзьям —
Нет места. В изглавье, в изножье,
И справа, и слева — ручищи по швам —
Жандармские груди и рожи.

Не дивно ли — и на тишайшем из лож
Препять поднадзорным мальчишкой?
На что-то, на что-то, на что-то похож
Почет сей, почетно — да слишком!

Гляди, мол, страна, как, молве вопреки,
Монарх о поэте печется!
Почетно — почетно — почетно — архи-
Почетно, — почетно — до черту!

Кого ж это так — точно воры вора
Пристреленного — выносили?
Изменишка? Нет. С проходного двора —
У меняйшего мужа России.

6. АННЕ АХМАТОВОЙ

О муза плача, прекраснейшая из муз!
О ты, шальное исчадие ночи белой!
Ты черную насылаешь метель на Русь,
И вопли твои вонзаются в нас, как стрелы.

И мы шарахаемся, и глухое: ох! —
Стотысячное — тебе присягает, — Анна
Ахматова! — это имя — огромный вздох,
И в глубь он падает, которая безымянна.

Мы коронованы тем, что одну с тобой
Мы землю топчем, что небо над нами — то же.
И тот, кто ранен смертельной твоей судьбой,
Уже бессмертным на смертное сходит ложе.

В певучем граде моем купола горят.
И Спаса светлого славят слепец бродячий...
— И я дарю тебе свой колокольный град,
Ахматова! — и сердце свое в придачу.

The Owl and the Pussy-cat

Igor Stravinsky

The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of
money,
Wrapped in a five pound note.
The Owl looked up to the stars above,
And sang to a small guitar,
'O lovely Pussy! O Pussy my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are,
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!

Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant fowl!
How charmingly sweet you sing!
O let us be married! too long have we
tarried:
But what shall we do for a ring?"
They sailed away, for a year and a day,
To the land where the Bong-tree grows
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood
With a ring at the end of his nose,
His nose,
His nose,
With a ring at the end of his nose.

"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one
shilling
Your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will."
So they took it away, and were married
next day
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,
They danced by the light of the moon,
The moon,
The moon,
They danced by the light of the moon.
-Edward Lear(1812-1888)